

Note of Meeting 19 July 2012

Title: Economy & Transport Board
Date and time: 19 July 2012, 11.00am
Venue: Local Government House

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Political Group	Council
Chairman	Peter Box CBE	Labour	Wakefield MDC
Vice Chair	Shona Johnstone	Conservative	Cambridgeshire CC
Deputy Chair	Mike Haines	Independent	Teignbridge DC
Members	Tony Ball	Conservative	Basildon DC
	Neil Clarke	Conservative	Rushcliffe BC
	Kevin Bentley	Conservative	Essex CC
	Gillian Brown	Conservative	Arun DC
	Roy Davis	Labour	Luton BC
	Claire Kober	Labour	Haringey LB
	Tony Page	Labour	Reading Council
	Guy Nicholson	Labour	Hackney LB
	Colin Rosenstiel	Liberal Democrat	Cambridge City
	Ian Stewart	Liberal Democrat	Cumbria CC
Apologies			
Deputy Chair	Roger Symonds	Liberal Democrat	Bath and North East Somerset
	Heather Kidd	Liberal Democrat	Shropshire Council
	Andrew Carter	Conservative	Leeds City
	Martin Tett	Conservative	Buckinghamshire CC
	Philip Atkins	Conservative	Staffordshire
	Anne Western	Labour	Derbyshire CC
Substitutes	Paul Yallop	Conservative	Worthing BC
	Peter Popple	Independent	Scarborough BC

In attendance: Ian Hughes; Philip Mind; Eamon Lally; Rachael Donaldson; Nick Porter; Virginia Ponton (LGA), Tim Goodship, BIS and Lorraine George, Essex CC

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
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The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and noted apologies.

1 Note of previous meeting

The Board agreed the minutes of the previous meeting.

2 City Deals

Philip Mind introduced the City Deals item, summarising the focus on youth unemployment, skills, the bringing together of economic investment funds and governance arrangements. Any new wave is likely to aim to extend deals, deepen them to be more ambitious and mainstream some aspects.

The Chair presented on the Leeds City Deal. He stressed the importance of being aware of realistic timescales and potential relationship tensions as well as the importance of discussing the role of and engagement with LEPs, ensuring cross-party buy-in, and being prepared to pool funds. Governance is key and the government is keen to see proposals which are strong in this area.

Members discussed:

- the need for a balance of bureaucracy, accountability and transparency with a practical structure that can deliver. Existing structures and mechanisms can be used rather than reinventing or duplicating.
- ensuring engagement with the Cities Unit.
- encouraging more involvement and engagement with neighbouring authorities; looking at the functional economic area rather than traditional boundaries.
- the difficulties of working with multiple local partners and two different government departments; BIS and DCLG.
- opportunities and the chance to be radical and redesign the local landscape to make it more practical.
- the importance of rural areas which often contain large economic hubs.
- the importance of focussing the new wave of deals on areas most likely to deliver rather than based on population size.
- ensuring a focus on outcomes; jobs, investment, improved rail network integration.
- the need to disseminate learning.

Ian Hughes said that an announcement on City Deals was expected in September.

Action

- Ian Hughes and Cllr Kevin Bentley to discuss peer support to future bidders.

Ian Hughes

3 Transport Update

The Chair updated the Board on an invitation to attend a HS2 Environmental Forum. Officers had attended with a watching brief only,

with a view to taking a decision on LGA involvement once the purpose of the meeting was clearer.

The Chair had met with the LGA Chairman on this issue. As there was a wide range of views on this issue in the sector, it was being recommended that that local authority interests at future meetings should be represented by four councils (rather than the LGA) to ensure that the widest views of the sector were aired.

Members raised a number of issues, including:

- The need to appreciate that views differed on this issue and that it was important to respect all views.
- The future of rail capacity.
- The lack of clarity on the terms of reference of the forum.
- The need for officer, rather than member, representation at the meetings.

Decision

For the LGA Chairman to request that that local authority interests at future HS2 environmental forum meetings should be by four councils to ensure that the widest views of the sector were aired. That this representation would be at officer level and that the decision could be reviewed once the meeting had clear terms of reference.

Cllr Tony Page abstained on the proposal.

Action

- A letter will be drafted from the Chair to the transport minister on TMA.
- Meeting with ORR and National Rail to be arranged.

Officers

4 EU Funds Post 2013 – Update and Lobbying Strategy

The Chair welcomed Tim Goodship, Local Growth Directorate, BIS and Lorraine George, Head of External Funding, Essex County Council.

Tim outlined the negotiations on regulations of structural funds, highlighting in particular the need to link funds to the EU strategy for growth and align with other funds. A greater local focus is bringing new opportunities locally.

Lorraine looked at what this means in practice for local authorities. She highlighted the importance of ensuring that the desired outcomes outweigh the time and risk in applying for funds, ensuring that funds align with local priorities and future plans and link to LEPs. Local authorities should have money to invest in these projects, treat EU funds as another source of funding rather than something more complex, consider match-funding, be prepared to work in partnership with Europe and support officers and members in travelling abroad.

Members discussed:

- the importance of applying for funds rather than being put off by the perception that funds are complex.
- difficulties for local authorities due to rules and goldplating around EU funds and the need for a more simplified process. Members asked Tim to take this back to BIS.

Action

- Presentations to be circulated.

Virginia Ponton

5 Moving the Local Growth Campaign forward

Ian Hughes introduced the item, saying that the campaign results were presented at conference and that more local authorities had come forward to ask for town hall debates in their areas.

Decision

The Board agreed to add 'SMEs in our local economies' to paragraph 11 of Item 5 in the agenda on new areas of work to develop.

The Board agreed the next stages outlined in the report.

Action

- Presentations to be circulated.
- 'SMEs in our local economies' to be added to the list of new areas of work to develop.

**Virginia Ponton
Rachael
Donaldson**

6 Performance Report 2011/12

The Board noted the performance report and the Chair thanked officer colleagues on the green ratings and the tremendous amount of work which had been delivered over a short space of time.

Action

- Full performance report to be circulated.

Virginia Ponton

7 Appointments to Outside Bodies 2012/13

The Board noted that the Motorists' Forum had not engaged with Cllr Neil Clarke over the last year.

Action

- Officers to speak with the Motorists' Forum.

Officers

The Board agreed to liaise with the political groups on appointments to the Bus Partnership Forum, Urban Commission and Rural Commission.

The Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.